

HOUSE RESOLUTION 240

By Gilmore

A RESOLUTION to recognize head coach Rick Byrd and the Belmont University men's basketball team upon completing an extraordinary season.

WHEREAS, the General Assembly is pleased to specially honor and commend those successful sports teams that, through their magnificent exploits, bring honor to Tennessee and serve as exceptional ambassadors of this State; and

WHEREAS, the Belmont University men's basketball Bruins are one such estimable team that achieved an extraordinary level of success during the 2011-2012 season, establishing a record of twenty-seven wins against only eight losses on their way to claiming the Atlantic Sun Conference Championship for the fifth time in seven years and advancing to the NCAA Tournament; and

WHEREAS, the Belmont Bruins rolled through the Atlantic Sun Conference Tournament, prevailing over Jacksonville (76-62) and East Tennessee State University (69-61) to reach the Championship Game against Florida Gulf Coast University; and

WHEREAS, having earned the regular season championship with a conference record of sixteen wins and two losses, the Bruins rebounded from an early thirteen-point deficit in the championship final to trail by only three points at the half; and

WHEREAS, attacking their foes with a tenacious defense and skillful offensive sets, the Bruins devoured Florida Gulf Coast in the second half, as they outscored their opponents by seventeen points to claim a 83-69 victory; and

WHEREAS, the win was their fourteenth consecutive victory and marked the end of their Atlantic Sun Conference competition, as Belmont University will join the Ohio Valley Conference in 2012-13; and

WHEREAS, Kerron Johnson was named Atlantic Sun Conference Tournament Most Valuable Player after scoring fourteen points, grabbing eleven rebounds and collecting five assists in the championship game; teammate Ian Clark joined him on the All-Tournament team; and

WHEREAS, Ian Clark was also named the Atlantic Sun Defensive Player of the Year and joined teammates Kerron Johnson and Drew Hanlen on the first team All-Atlantic Sun, while teammate Mick Hedgepeth earned second team honors; and

WHEREAS, after advancing to the NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament for the fifth time in school history, the Bruins had their title hopes extinguished by the Georgetown Hoyas; and

WHEREAS, displaying great sportsmanship and outstanding character, the members of the Belmont University men's basketball team conducted themselves in a manner appropriate to the integrity of the State of Tennessee during a valiant effort in the NCAA Tournament; and

WHEREAS, the Belmont University men's basketball team includes: seniors Drew Hanlen, Scott Saunders, and Mick Hedgepeth; juniors Kerron Johnson, Ian Clark, Adam Barnes, Trevor Noack, and Brandon Baker; sophomores Blake Jenkins and J.J. Mann; and freshmen Chad Lang, Holden Mobley, Seth Cavera, Spencer Turner, and Reece Chamberlain; and

WHEREAS, this extraordinary basketball program has been shaped and forged by nationally-acclaimed head coach Rick Byrd, a member of the NAIA Hall of Fame, who marked his thirty-first year as a head coach; he now holds a career record of 637 wins against only 340 losses, with a record at Belmont of 545 wins against only 285 losses; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the able leadership of Head Coach Byrd, Belmont's outstanding staff includes Associate Head Coach Brian Ayers, Assistant Coach James Strong, Assistant Coach Mark Price; Athletic Trainer Paul Malloy, Director of Basketball Operations Tyler Holloway; and Administrative Assistant Debbie Chenoweth; and

WHEREAS, the men's team at Belmont University epitomize all that is good in today's student-athlete, as they have achieved a premier level of success in competition while exhibiting the highest degree of character both on and off the court; and

WHEREAS, the perseverance, determination, work ethic, and talent of this group of young men not only made possible an extraordinary basketball season, but also surely bode well for their success in every future enterprise; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly finds it appropriate to acknowledge and applaud the Belmont Bruins for winning the 2011-2012 Atlantic Sun Conference Championship, for qualifying for the NCAA Tournament, and for serving as examples of the exceptional quality of Tennessee's student athletes; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby congratulate head coach Rick Byrd and the members of the Belmont University men's basketball team on their outstanding 2011-2012 season and wish them every success in all future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.